

NBC NIGHTLY NEWS
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BROKAW: Good evening. I'm Tom Brokaw with NBC Nightly <
>REAGAN>News, and President Reagan today became involved in the
case of the controversial CIA manual. It is a training
manual prepared for rebels backed by the United States
fighting the Sandinista government of Nicaragua. Among
other things, it suggests selective violence to neutralize
members of the Nicaraguan government. That means
assassination. Robin Lloyd reports tonight the president
has ordered an investigation of the manual, and Democrats
are keeping the heat on.

LLOYD: The president wants as much distance between him
and the pamphlet as possible. It fell to White House
spokesman Larry Speakes to explain the administration's
position. In a prepared statement, Speakes said, 'The
administration has not advocated or condoned political
assassinations or any other attacks on civilians, nor will
we.' Speakes said the president has asked the CIA to
investigate the possibility of improper conduct on the
part of its own employees and report to Congress whether
any laws were broken in publishing the manual. Sources
within the Nicaraguan rebel movement say it was a CIA
agent who wrote the booklet. They say he spent two-months
training the commandoes on how to use terror for political
advantage. Under the heading of 'armed propaganda,' the
booklet says it is possible to neutralize carefully-
selected and planned targets such as Nicaraguan court
judges, police and state security officials. Rebel-
sources say the booklet was written a year ago when the
CIA was directing attacks on Nicaraguan ports and the
mining of Nicaraguan harbors. They say the agent who
wrote the pamphlet was a Vietnam veteran who gave classes
in guerrilla warfare at a U.S. military school. Senior
administration officials now say that the pamphlet was not
approved by high-level officials. They said it was,
quote, 'a free-wheeling, free-lance carried out by a
low-level CIA employee.' But it was the CIA Director
William Casey who was the target of angry Democrats.
House Speaker Tip O'Neill: REP. TIP O'NEILL (D-Mass.):
...like I believe that Casey ought to be out of there.
UNIDENTIFIED MALE VOICE: Now? O'NEILL: Forthwith,
unless, and if he isn't, then it shows the president
condones the actions of a Mr., of Mr. Casey.

LLOYD: This evening in New York, reporters pressed him on
the controversy. UNIDENTIFIED FEMALE REPORTER'S VOICE:
Is the CIA out of control in Central America, sir?
RONALD REAGAN: Not at all, (unintelligible) ...my own

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investigation as well as the CIA investigation is moving forward.

LLOYD: What's especially worrisome to the administration is that it is now open to charges that it is breaking the law by condoning political assassinations and by supporting terrorist tactics, and all this just a few days before this Sunday's debate. Robin Lloyd, NBC News, Washington.